

# Aging Division

## Wyoming Department of Health

### Information and Education Bulletin

#### **Subject: Cost Saving Ideas**

We sought the advice of some other Senior Centers and did some internal research to come up with the following cost savings ideas that may benefit Wyoming's Senior Centers. These may or may not be beneficial to your organization, but we wanted to share them just the same. These are only ideas that may be helpful and are in no way a mandate of any kind. You would need to research and examine your internal needs and limitations to determine if any of these are right for your organization.

- Seek Advice from the Small Business Association – What do they recommend for cost savings?
- Collaborate with other organizations – Share ideas and brainstorm – Don't reinvent the wheel
- In the Winter months, cover Non-emergency exit Windows with Plastic Sheeting for heat retention
- Consider Voice Over IP Phones that run through the Internet – Some of these have business packages at a set rate of \$40 to \$50 a month and include all long distance calls ([www.lingo.com](http://www.lingo.com))
- Turn off all non-essential items when not in use and unplug items not in use or after hours – If it is plugged in, it is still drawing power
- Look at Free Software for Business Applications. [www.sourceforge.net](http://www.sourceforge.net) has some great items that are free.
- Use Email for sending out newsletters and other items when possible. You can convert their newsletter and other items to a PDF file that can be viewed with Adobe Acrobat with a free program called PDFCreator <http://sourceforge.net/projects/pdfcreator/>
- Utilize Email more for other communications when feasible. GMAIL web email has a myriad of great features, including a large amount of storage and the ability to be used with Microsoft Outlook or Thunderbird and is free. Some of the clients are using the internet more and more and this is very cost effective.
- Consolidate Items into fewer fridges/freezers – Some may have only a few items based on previous visits.
- Do not place extra items for usage on tables (condiments, napkins, etc.) – Out of sight is out of mind (A Restaurant Consultant could also provide other helpful hints in this area)
- Look at cutting hours – The federal requirement is that federally funded senior centers are open from 10 to 2 – Decreased hours cuts on staff costs and utilities.
- Explore Frozen Meals for Title III C2 and Medicaid Waiver Meals – Calls can still be made to recipients to “check on” clients on non-delivery days
- Implement Waiting Lists where appropriate – This is completely appropriate and acceptable

- Cut back on non-essential travel – Can meetings be held with free teleconferencing services (<http://www.freeconference.com/>)
- Look at software for assisting with Bookkeeping/Finances – Some programs are specifically for Non-Profit groups
- Look at Job Sharing Opportunities – Can the Janitor also be a bus-driver and vice-versa?
- Compare costs of buying some items already processed – e.g. Carrots that are already cut verses cutting them if the cost difference is minimal – Don't spend \$5.00 on staff salaries to save \$1.00 on a raw food item
- Look at requesting a Waiver to not serve meals 260 days per year – the Administration on Aging allows this  
Look at external contracts for cleaning and cleaning supplies – What can be bought locally vs. through a supplier – What can be cleaned locally? These external contracts are often VERY costly and resellers charge up to \$10 for a bottle of bleach that can be purchased for \$2 at the local grocery store
- Raise Suggested Contribution levels for services
- For Guest meals, charge the full price for meals
- Tap into volunteer resources? Boy Scouts, Faith Based Organizations, etc.
- Look at automatic thermostats that set back after hours
- Look at maintaining files electronically rather than printing them out
- Florescent Light Bulbs
- Lock Supply Cabinet/Fridge/Freezer – This reduces risk for theft and over-usage
- Look at asking meal recipients to RSVP to eliminate cooking extra meals that are then thrown away
- Get buy in from stakeholders – If a person feels that they have contributed, they aren't "surprised" by changes and are more likely to accept them
- Ask for an Energy Audit from your power company

To look at what is really effective establish benchmarks that analyze impact after changes are put in place. What's working, what's not working? Etc. One source I found said the following:

***Benchmarking - KPI's*** - *Benchmarking is the best indication of how your operations is performing. By developing a set of consistent and measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPI's), you can measure your costs, productivity and efficiency. Once you've completed and analyzed your existing operation, you will want to compare yourself to accepted industry benchmarks. You want to avoid using general industry averages as those won't be specific to your business in product type, size and customers. Many companies are utilizing management reporting online for critical KPI's for contact center and fulfillment. You can't improve activities which have not been measured.*

**Again, this list is in no way a mandate of any kind, but a listing of ideas from your peers and from our research that might be helpful in these challenging economic times. A special thanks to those who contributed to this list.**